DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

VOL. II NO. 17 AUGUST 21st 1953 Price: 15 Pf., 5 c., 3 d

Historic Soviet Note Proposes:

PEACE CONFERENCE WITHOUT DELAY

The states which took part in the war against Hitlerite Germany should meet without delay to conclude a peace treaty with Germany, the Soviet Union proposed in a note addressed to Britain, France and USA on August 15th.

Main proposals made in the note included:

1. A peace Conference should meet before February 1954. German delegates should take part in all stages of the preparation of the conference.

2. A Provisional All-German Government should be formed by the existing parliaments of East and West Germany.

3. The All-German Government should prepare free democratic general elections throughout Germany, free from all foreign pressure.

4. All reparations and post-war state debts should be cancelled from January 1954.

5. Occupation costs should be limited to 5% of the budgets of East and West Germany, and in any case not higher than in 1949, before the North Atlantic Pact sent costs soaring.

The Soviet note pointed out that under the Bonn and Paris treaties, concluded between West Germany and the western powers, a new aggressive Wehrmacht, led by Hitler's generals, was to be built up in West Germany.

"This will lead to the revival of German militarism, the creation of a new centre of aggression, and a further increase in the danger of a new war in Europe" the note stated.

"To take this path means to depart from all the solemn international pledges, taken by USA and Britain in the Potsdam Agreement in 1945, aimed at the restoration of Germany as a peace-loving and democratic state..."

The note stressed that eight years had passed since the Potsdam Agreement was concluded, and that there had been a lot of changes in this period which would have to be taken into account. The basic principle of the Potsdam Agreement, however, the creation of a peace-loving and democratic Germany, was in the interests of all the peoples of Europe, including the German people.

The Soviet note sounded a warning against the integration of West Germany in the "European Army" and the North Atlantic Bloc. "This would mean that West Germany could no longer be regarded as a peace-loving state... and would make impossible the joining together of West and East Germany in a united state...

"It is just for this reason that the overwhelming majority of Germans, both in the German Democratic Republic and West Germany, supported by the peace-loving people of the whole of Europe, are opposed to the plans of the Adenauer Government to drag West Germany into the 'European Army' and the North Atlantic Bloc."

The East German Government gave an immediate warm welcome to the new Soviet proposals. President Wilhelm Pieck, in a broadcast on August 17th, called upon the parliaments of East and West Germany to do their national duty in establishing a joint provisional government.

"This is a moment when all differences of opinion and political ideas must take second place to the interests of the entire German people" he stated.

President Pieck pointed out the particular importance for West Germany of the proposal to reduce occupation costs, since the occupation costs there had risen from 3900 million marks in 1949 to 9300 million marks in 1953.

TERMS OF PROPOSED PEACE TREATY

Here are the main points of the draft peace treaty for Germany proposed by the Soviet Union:

Participants: The states whose armed forces took part in the war against Hitlerite Germany.

Unity: Germany to be united as a democratic, independent peace-loving state.

Occupation: All occupation forces to be withdrawn within year of conclusion of peace treaty, and all military bases liquidated.

Freedoms: Freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of religion, freedom of political conviction, freedom of assembly to be guaranteed; democratic rights for all without distinction of race, sex, language or religion.

Parties: Freedom of activity for democratic parties and organisations; prohibition of organisations opposed to democracy and the maintenance of peace.

Alliances: Germany to enter no alliance directed against any state whose armed forces took part in the war against nazi Germany.

Territory: Frontiers as fixed by the Potsdam Conference.

Economic Development: No limitations upon development of peace economy and trade.

Armed Forces: National armed forces necessary for defence. Production of war material in quantities sufficient to supply this armed force, as laid down in peace treaty.

International Organisations: Germany's application for membership of United Nations will be supported.

(A point by point comparison of the Soviet draft treaty, and the Bonn Treaty concluded with West Germany will be found on page 4.)

GOVERNMENT FOR ALL GERMANY

Main Points of New Soviet Note

Here are the main points of the proposals for the settlement of the German problem made in the Soviet Note of August 15th 1953:

The Soviet Government believes that the solution of the following main questions with regard to Germany cannot be delayed:

1. Calling a peace conference to deal with the question of a peace treaty with Germany.

The Soviet Government assumes that such a conference, with the participation of all interested states, can be summoned within the next six months. The Soviet Government sees no reason for further delay in calling the peace conference. The entire preliminary work for the preparation of a peace conference with Germany could be concluded within the period proposed.

It is important to ensure a proper participation of the representatives of Germany at all stages of the preparation of the peace treaty, as well as at the peace conference. Until a provisional All-German Government is formed, representatives of the existing governments of East and West Germany could take part in the preparations.

2. Establishing a Provisional All-German Government and holding free all-German elections.

With the aim of re-establishing the national unity of Germany on a peaceful and democratic basis, the Soviet Government proposes that the parliaments of the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic, with the broad-based participation of the democratic organisations, should establish a Provisional All-German Government. Such a government can be formed by direct agreement between East and West Germany as the successor to the existing governments of the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic.

If this should prove to be difficult at the present time, a Provisional All-German Government can also be created parallel with the temporary continuation of the governments of the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic. In this case the Provisional All-German Government would understandably wield only limited powers during the first stage. Even under such circumstances, however, the creation of a Provisional All-German Government would represent a real step forwards to the re-unification of Germany, a step which must reach final fulfilment in the creation of an all-German government on the basis of really free all-German elections.

The tasks of the Provisional All-German Government:

a) The Provisional All-German Government could solve such urgent problems of an all-German nature as: The representation of Germany in the preparation of the peace treaty, and representation in international organisations;

Not allowing Germany to be drawn into coalitions or military alliances directed against any state whose armed forces participated in the war against Hitlerite Germany;

Questions of German citizenship;

Ensuring the freedom of action of democratic parties and organisations, and the prohibition of fascist, militarist and other organisations hostile to democracy and the cause of maintaining peace;

Extension of trade relations between East and West Germany;

Questions of traffic, post and telecommunications;

Questions of the free passage of goods and passengers independent of the fixed zonal frontiers;

The development of economic and cultural relations between East and West Germany;

Other questions which affect the interests of the entire German people.

b) The main task of the Provisional All-German Government must be the preparation and the holding of all-German free elections, in which the German people themselves will settle the problems of the social and state form of democratic Germany without the intervention of foreign states.

The Provisional All-Grman Government must work out the draft for an all-German electoral law guaranteeing that the all-German elections have a really democratic character, that all democratic organisations participate in the elections and that the pressure of the great monopolies on the electors is not permitted. The Provisional All-German Government must decide freely whether it is expedient to conduct an investigation as to how far the necessary conditions exist throughout Germany for holding democratic

FACTS ON REPARATIONS

The Potsdam Agreement of 1945 laid down that "Germany be compelled to compensate to the greatest possible degree for the loss and suffering that she has caused to the United Nations and for which the German people cannot escape responsibility...

"Reparations claims of the USSR shall be met by removals from the zone of Germany occupied by the USSR and from appropriate German external assets...

"The reparations claims of the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries entitled to reparations shall be met from the Western zones and from appropriate German external assets."

At the Yalta Conference, the American and Soviet delegates had agreed that total reparations of $ 20 thousand million should be claimed from Germany, of which one half — $ 10 thousand million — should go to the Soviet Union. The Soviet State Commission established to investigate war damage estimated the damage directly resulting from the nazi occupation at $ 128 thousand million, so that less than one twelfth of the damage was covered by the proposed figures.

On May 15th 1950 Soviet Prime Minister Joseph Stalin wrote to East German Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl stating:

„The Soviet Government has taken into account the fact that the German Democratic Republic is conscientiously fulfilling its reparations obligations... and that by the end of 1950 a substantial part of these obligations, to the amount of $ 3658 million will have been fulfilled.

"...the Soviet Government has decided to reduce the sum of reparations payments still to be paid by 50 %, i. e., to $ 3171 thousand million."

Under this arrangement the German Democratic Republic would have continued to pay reparations until the year 1965.

elections, and must take the necessary measures to ensure such conditions.

At the same time the Soviet Government considers it to be necessary for the governments of France, USA, Britain and the USSR to take measures for the holding of all-German elections in real freedom; measures which would exclude even the slightest pressure on the part of foreign states in the holding of these elections.

3. Easing the financial and economic obligations of Germany arising from the results of the war.

Taking into consideration the fact that Germany has already fulfilled an important part of its financial and economic obligations arising from the results of the war to the USSR, France, Great Britain and USA, and in view of the necessity of easing the economic position of Germany, the Government of the USSR regards it as urgently necessary to take corresponding decisions.

a) The Soviet Government regards it as necessary that from January 1st 1954, Germany should be completely freed of the obligation to pay reparations and the repayment of post-war state debts to the four great powers, with the exception of obligations arising from trade agreements.

b) The Soviet Government further considers it necessary to limit the extent of the expenditure connected with the stay in German territory of the troops of the four great powers. For this purpose it is proposed that the entire sum devoted to the support of these troops should not exceed five percent annually of the budget of the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic, and that it should in no case exceed the entire sum of the occupation costs in 1949, at a time when the formation of the North Atlantic Bloc had not yet had an effect upon the size of the occupation costs.

At the same time the Soviet Government proposes that Germany should be completely freed from those debts which have been incurred since 1945 outside Germany from the occupation expenses of the four great powers.

The Soviet Government expresses the conviction that an understanding between the USSR, France, USA and Britain on the German problem, and an early decision on the proposals made above, would serve to decrease tension in international relations and thus contribute to the strengthening of peace and international security.

PHOTOS CAN LIE

Quick
Bajonette gegen Arbeits-Sklaven
Hunderttausend Arbeiter der Wismuth-A.G. im Uran-Gebiet von Aue demonstrierten gegen ihre Unterdrücker. Die Bajonette der sowjetrussischen Besatzungsmacht trieben die Wehrlosen zu ihren Fronstätten zurück. Dieses Foto wurde von einem russischen Soldaten aufgenommen und gelangte auf seltsamen Umwegen in den freien Westen.

Photos most certainly can lie, or at least the captions can. Above you see a picture printed in "Quick", sensational West German illustrated weekly published in Munich American Zone, in its issue of July 19th. The picture was one of a series allegedly picturing conditions in East Germany.

The caption to the picture states:

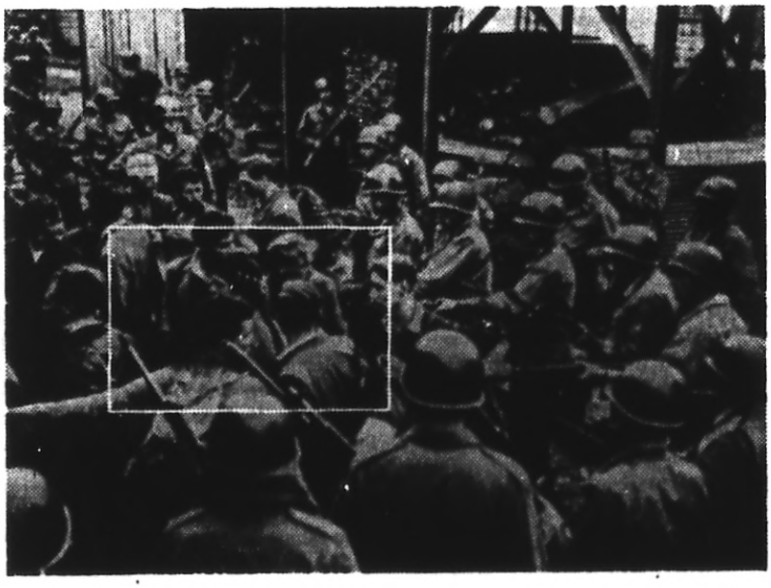
BAYONETS AGAINST LABOUR SLAVES

One hundred thousand workers of the Wismuth AG in the uranium mines in Aue demonstrated against their oppressors. The bayonets of the Soviet Russian occupation power drive these defenceless people back to their place of serfdom. This photo was taken by a Russian soldier, and reached the free West by a strange and devious route.

You may very well remember having seen the picture somewhere before, for it was widely printed in the progressive press two years ago.

It is, you see, a picture of American occupation troops in Austria threatening with their bayonets a group of young British men and women on their way to the World Youth Festival held in Berlin in August 1951.

On this occasion, as will be remembered, the American authorities in Austria dropped an "iron curtain" of their own and refused to let young people from western Europe travel to Berlin for the great peace meeting.



TREATIES COMPARED

Terms of Bonn Treaty and subsidiary agreements	Draft Peace Treaty proposed by Soviet Union
a) Method of conclusion:	
West German Chancellor signed the Bonn Treaty and subsidiary military agreements with Acheson, Eden and Schuman without even informing the Bonn Parliament of the terms. West Germany is not proposed for United Nations membership.	**An all-German government and all countries which participated in the war against Germany will take part in the peace conference. After the Peace Treaty has come into force Germany will enter the United Nations.**
b) Occupation:	
Occupation to continue for indeterminate period. Foreign troops have unlimited use of West German territory. Article 5 of the Bonn Treaty lays down that orders can be given at any time for foreign troops to go into action "to maintain or restore order."	**"All armed forces of the occupation powers must be withdrawn from Germany at the latest one year after a peace treaty with Germany comes into force. At the same time all foreign military bases on German territory will be liquidated."**
c) Military Clauses:	
Mercenary forces including 458,000 infantry, 25,000 naval personnel and an air force of unspecified size under the command of former Hitler generals and the supreme command of an American general. Arms production including all sizes of tanks and artillery to go ahead at full blast. West Germany is to be "integrated" in the aggressive West European Defence Community.	"Germany will be allowed to possess its own national armed forces necessary for the defence of the country. Germany will be allowed to produce war material and equipment in quantities not exceeding those needed by the armed forces laid down for Germany in the peace treaty. "Germany guarantees to enter into no coalition or military alliance directed against any state whose armed forces took part in the war against Germany."
d) Organisations:	
Democratic organisations such as the Free German Youth and the Victims of Nazism already banned, and ban pending on the Communist Party. Old Soldier's organisations, neo-fascist leagues allowed full freedom of action.	"Democratic parties and organisations ... must be guaranteed freedom of activity ... Organisations opposed to democracy and the cause of the maintenance of peace will not be allowed to exist on German territory."
e) Trade:	
Prohibition of trade with East Germany and with the Soviet Union and East Europe. Forced imports of manufactured goods and exports of raw materials.	**"No limitations will be placed upon the development of Germany's peace economy, which should serve to increase the prosperity of the German people. No limitations will be imposed on trade with other countries, on merchant shipping, and on entry to the world market."**
f) Sovereignty:	
Germany remains partitioned. All laws, orders and regulations issued by the High Commissioners remain in force. The West German Republic renounces "certain sovereign rights." No limits are placed on the "Defence Contribution" which could mean sending German mercenaries to any part of the world.	**"Germany will be restored as a united state. This ... will give united Germany the opportunity to develop as an independent, democratic, peace loving state. The German people must be guaranteed democratic rights so that all persons subject to German law, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion shall enjoy the human rights and fundamental freedoms."**

Malenkov on Germany

The Soviet Union has no intention of allowing the re-establishment or re-birth of an aggressive military Germany, Soviet Prime Minister G. Malenkov told the Supreme Soviet on August 8th.

Here are the most important passages of Mr. Malenkov's speech dealing with Germany:

"Urgent questions, such as the German question, must be solved. The German question must and can be settled.

"To achieve this it is necessary to proceed from the interests of strengthening the security of all European countries, and in the first place the security of Germany's western and eastern neighbours, and at the same time from the national interests of the German people.

"For this purpose it is necessary to give up the policy of dragging Germany into aggressive military blocs, to abandon the policy of restoring an aggressive militarist Germany.

"They (the Americans, ed.) want us to agree to the rebirth of an aggressive militarist Germany, and at the same time they allow themselves to talk of ensuring peace in Europe.

"Our people did not shed the blood of millions of their sons and daughters in the war against militarist Germany in order to restore once more this most dangerous hotbed of war in Europe.

"The great powers have assumed the obligation of preserving, not destroying, Germany's national unity; of ensuring the transformation of Germany into a peace-loving democratic state, not facilitating the rebirth of German militarism.

"The Soviet Union, for its part, will make every effort to facilitate the carrying out of these obligations. The German people have drawn serious conclusions from their own history. They do not want to shed their blood once more for the sake of the militarist clique which has already, on more than one occasion, brought Germany to catastrophe.

"A militarist Germany, regardless of whether it appears in its former guise, or camouflaged as part of the 'European Defence Community' is a deadly foe of France and other neighbouring states."

Nazi Consul for Hong Kong

An old nazi, Dr. Herbert Dittmann, has been appointed West German Consul-General in the British colony of Hong Kong.

Dittmann was one of Ribbentrop's assistants in the nazi Foreign Ministry, where he worked in the personnel department. He joined the nazi party in 1937.

In 1952, after it had been disclosed that 66 percent of all West German diplomats were old nazis, a West German parliamentary commission recommended: "Dittmann should be removed from the Foreign Ministry because of the assistance he gave to a group of National Socialists infiltrating the Foreign Ministry."

West German Chancellor Adenauer simply ignored this recommendation, and retained Dittmann.

Doctors' Salaries Up

All doctors, dentists and chemists who work for the state medical service in East Germany will get considerable salary increases, the Cabinet of the German Democratic Republic decided on August 6th.

The Cabinet earmarked the sum of 20 million marks for salary increases, which will amount to 10 % in the case of factory doctors and doctors employed in clinics in country districts.

East German Protestants Visit Hamburg

The East German state railways provided special trains for the 10,000 Protestants from the German Democratic Republic who visited Hamburg, in West Germany, for the Evangelical Church Congress held in the second week of August.

The President of the Congress, Dr. von Thadden-Trieglaff, telegraphed East German Prime Minister Grotewohl thanking him for the aid given in the form of interzonal passes and transport facilities.

"You have thus helped the German Evangelical Congress to carry out its important service to our people in East and West" the telegram stated.

Magdeburg Church restored

The Protestant "Marienkirche" church in Magdeburg, which was badly damaged by American bombs during the war, was reconsecrated on August 9th after being rebuilt with the aid of funds granted by the East German Government.

YOUR Union Dues Used To Pay Spies & Buy Arms?

The right-wing "International Confederation of Free Trade Unions" announced on August 10th that it had decided to grant one million West German marks "to support workers in the Soviet Zone" and to establish a permanent bureau in West Berlin.

The I.C.F.T.U., to which the British T.U.C. is affiliated, is largely financed with American money, provided through the American Federation of Labour.

The two clippings reproduced below show the sort of "support" which the one million marks will produce — payment for spies and armed terrorists.

AFL Sponsors Anti-Red Spy Ring in Berlin

By ART NOYES,
(Special Correspondent of THE NEWS)

Frankfurt, March 15.—The American Federation of Labor is sponsoring a spy organization in Berlin, it was disclosed here today.

The AFL transmits approximately $10,000 a month to the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency, which in turn passes the money on to a group called the Kampfgruppe (combat group).

The Kampfgruppe has an overt information section whose function is to collect all facts concerning Russian concentration camps. It also has a top-secret spy section, whose operations are known only to U. S. Intelligence.

"New York Daily News"
March 16th 1953

LABOR CHIEFS URGE EAST GERMAN AID

Meany and Reuther Call Upon Eisenhower for Leadership in Freeing Soviet Zone

N. Y. TIMES

STOCKHOLM, Sweden, July 6 (AP)—The American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations urged President

In a speech to the first plenary session of the confederation, Mr. Reuther warned that free workers must be prepared to take to weapons, if necessary, to fight communism.

adopting a resolution.

"We must work hard on the social and economic fronts to fight communism—if need be also with weapons," he said.

"New York Times" July 7th 1953

EAST GERMAN DELEGATION FOR MOSCOW

A fifteen man East German delegation, led by Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl, has gone to Moscow to discuss the German problem with the Soviet Government.

The Soviet invitation to the meeting stated:

"The Soviet Government believes that the time has come to discuss several important problems affecting the development of relations between the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic, and current questions affecting the German question as a whole."

The German delegation to Moscow includes, apart from Deputy Prime Ministers Walter Ulbricht and Otto Nuschke and a number of cabinet ministers, the chairmen of the Free German Trade Union and the Free German Youth.

West German Accident Rate Spirals

Search for Profits Causes Accidents

Accident rates in West German industry today are far higher than even during the nazi period, and are still rising fast. Experts who have analysed the figures conclude that the increased degree of exploitation in the fight for maximum capitalist profits, which entails speed-up and the neglect of safety precautions, is responsible for the big rise.

Here are the figures, from official sources, for work accidents and occupational disease per thousand persons employed in industry:

1934	74.05
1938	85.59

(Figures from Statistische Jahrbücher für das Deutsche Reich.)

1950	100.90
1951	107.62
1952	111.47

(Figures from Arbeits- und Sozialstatistische Mitteilungen, Jahrgänge 1950/51/52.)

Broken down industry by industry, the sharp rise in the accident rate becomes even more apparent, and even more shocking. Here are the figures, taken from the same source as above:

	1950	1951	1952
Mining . .	245.37	260.88	301.92
Engineering .	115.68	162.49	173.20
Woodworking	94.99	119.20	122.17
Building . .	93.76	143.87	149.62

Since in mining the majority of the accidents take place below the surface, and the figures above include surface workers, the actual position in 1952 was that over one third of all underground workers were involved in accidents during 1952, and about one in eight suffered from an occupational disease. The precise figures were 364 accidents per thousand workers and 70 cases of occupational disease.

Footnote: Statistics show that the development in the German Democratic Republic, where the trade unions devote great attention to safety measures, was quite different. In the first quarter of 1953, latest date for which figures are available, accidents at work were down 6.1 % on the 1952 figure, and fatal accidents had fallen by nearly 10 %.

E. German Production Rises

Industrial production in East Germany was up over 10 percent in the second quarter of this year, compared to last year's figures, the Plan Commission reported on August 9th.

Despite this big rise production had lagged 2 % behind the target figures set, the report stated.

Particularly big increases had been registered in the production of iron ore, 134 % up on last year; engineering equipment which had doubled; mining machinery, up 72 %; and motor trucks, up 158 %.

The Plan Report criticised the irregular delivery of raw materials to the factories, which had meant in some cases hold-ups in production.

Work productivity was up 10 % over the same period in 1952, but costs had only been reduced by 2.4 % in nationally owned industry, less than was called for in the plan.

Price Cut for T. V.

Prices for T. V. sets have been slashed in East Germany. The standard receiver of the "Leningrad" type, built on Soviet licence, has been reduced from 3500 marks to 1450 marks, and easy payment terms may be arranged.

All types of brushes and brooms were reduced in price on August 10th by between 10 and 50 percent.

"Bundles for Berlin" Through New York Eyes

By Alan Max

Good times are coming!

It is rumoured that Eisenhower has ordered the Department of Agriculture to go up and down the streets of American cities and leave sacks of butter, barley and flour on every doorstep.

Where people refuse to take it, the Department officials have orders to throw it into the house through an open window.

Don't worry about your grocery bill, Eisenhower's man will be passing your way tomorrow.

The Worker, New York, July 19th 1953

East German Camera for Professor Piccard

Professor A. Piccard, world famous deep-sea explorer who is now planning a new deeper-than-ever expedition, is going to take along a camera made in a nationally owned East German camera factory.

The professor has been supplied with the latest model Ihagee "Exacta-Varex", a 35 mm camera with mirror reflex and speeds of up to 1/1000th of a second.

Acknowledging receipt of the camera the Professor wrote:

"I have received, examined and admired the camera. I do not believe that it would have been possible to invent a camera more perfectly adapted to our needs. It is perfect in every respect."

More Schools — For Toddlers and Adults

There was a big expansion both in nursery school accommodation and in adult education in East Germany during the first half of 1953, the quarterly report of the State Plan Commission disclosed.

During this period places were provided for over 21,000 more children in day nurseries and nursery schools. In the adult evening universities the number of students was 100,000 more this year than it was last year.

Between January and June 1953 22 new factory clinics were opened, and 281 newly equipped first aid centres were established in factories.

Democratic GERMAN REPORT

Subscriptions rates: 4 marks, 8/- sterling $ 1.25 per annum or pro rata, postage paid.

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Democratic German Report, Friedrichstrasse 167 III, Berlin W 8, Germany.

"Free Democratic Elections" in West Germany

TERROR & REPRESSION AGAINST PROGRESSIVES

From all parts of West Germany come reports of a campaign of terror and repression against all progressive candidates and parties in the campaign preceding the West German general elections to be held on September 6th.

Here is a short selection of recent reports:

On August 12th U. S. military police in Worms, American Zone, opened fire on Communist election canvassers who were posting election placards.

In Rheine, British Zone, fascist storm troopers, under police protection broke up an election meeting of the Communist Party on August 8th. After beating up parliamentary candidate Joseph Ledewohn and another Communist so severely that they had to be taken to hospital, the fascists smashed the meeting hall, burnt red flags, and sang nazi songs.

A court in Bremen, American Zone, jailed for four weeks two supporters of progressive candidates who had posted placards thus "damaging property".

In all parts of West Germany police have confiscated great quantities of progressive election literature "on suspicion". West German Minister of the Interior Robert Lehr proudly proclaimed that 1,500,000 (legal) election leaflets issued by the (legal) League of Germans had been confiscated. In Bayreuth police searched the houses of many progressives and seized copies of the election programme of the Communist Party.

Many hundreds of public meetings properly registered with the police have been banned by the authorities on the grounds that the are "likely to lead to a breach of the peace". Police took no steps to protect meetings, but in most case gave special protection to fascist strong-arm gangs. In Neuberg, American Zone for instance, workers ejected fascist rowdies from a meeting, and the police immediately moved in and closed it down.

In Dortmund, British Zone, four workers were jailed for a total of 15 months for distributing election leaflets.

As we go to press, at least three Communist parliamentary candidates, Oskar Neumann, Karl Dickel and Jupp Angenforth are in prison and unable to campaign. Karl Dickel has been in prison for over 11 months without any proceedings being taken against him.

While progressive electioneering meets every possible obstacle, fascist candidates and supporters have every possible freedom of action. Leading representatives of the parties making up Chancellor Adenauer's coalition, and of the neo-fascist parties standing even further to the right, made open propaganda for a war of revenge against the Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

SS General Gille, organiser of the West German association of former SS men called upon all his old fellow-murderers to vote for Adenauer. "Adenauer knows that we are the cream of the German nation, and he will call upon us again", General Gille stated.

In Wilhelmshaven, British Zone, Nazi Admiral Heye, leader of the militaristic "German Marine League" is standing as a candidate for Adenauer's Christian Democrats.

At an election meeting in Luenberg, British Zone, on August 9th, Free Democrat Reinhold Kreitmeyer, one of Adenauer's supporters declared: "The German soldier of the future must go out and win." He demanded the release of all imprisoned war criminals and the speedy introduction of conscription for a West German Wehrmacht.

(cont from page 8)

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

I know some of the sub-editors in the London office of Reuters read this page. The next time one of you is on night shift, and things are slack, wander along to the library and pull out the drawer "Germany: Elections."

You will probably find my story of May 17th 1949 still on file. Then search the dusty piles for the service message clip of the same date, look up the message sent to West Berlin, copy the two of them out, and mail them to me.

I cannot see any objection, since after all I wrote one, and the other was addressed to me.

•

Since in this column I spend so much space pointing out the motes in my brothers' eyes, I must be particularly careful to cast out my own beams.

In Berlin Notebook on August 7th, I criticised the Manchester Guardian correspondent for saying West Berlin Mayor Reuter makes "rare" broadcasts. I named the Hon. Terence Prittie as the correspondent who made the statement, and went on to say that Mayor Reuter made a regular weekly propaganda broadcast.

After the story was already in print I discovered that the Hon. Terence Prittie was on holiday, and that the story had been written by Mr. Mark Forster (who should have known better). Not only that, but on checking I found that Mayor Reuter only broadcasts every two weeks (I should have known better).

The substance of my criticism is not altered, but the mistakes are very regrettable. It will be a lesson to me to check more thoroughly in future.

•

A few days ago, when everything was absolutely placid and normal in East Germany, the United Press correspondent in West Berlin thought that a new sensation was needed, so he filed a story about "three divisions of Soviet tanks being ordered out." The Associated Press correspondent, always a quick man with a good rumour, countered with a fine bright lie about "25,000 workers down tools, stage hunger march on Berlin."

Newspapers offices in London and New York started frantically cabling their special correspondents in West Berlin, hauling them out of beds and bars, asking for eyewitness stories.

In the middle of the excitement, so the rumour goes, the correspondent of the sedate Times, London, rang the correspondent of an almost equal austere American paper to ask him what was cooking.

"Everything is fine," said the ripe Bostonian voice at the other end of the wire. "The phoney U. P. tanks have wiped out the phoney A. P. hunger-marchers, and we can all go back to bed now."

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

With the German newspapers full these days of the West German general election due on September 6th, my thoughts have turned to the various elections and plebiscites which I covered in the course of the years which I spent as a foreign correspondent of Reuters, the British news agency.

There was the Austrian general election in November 1945. It was quiet and normal enough, but the British and American correspondents "interpreting" the election for their readers back home cannot well be described with the same adjectives.

Vienna . . .

Most of them were front-line war correspondents who had landed in Vienna at the end of the war, and had little or no knowledge of the country they were in. Some of the stories which went out were hair-raising in their lack of connection with the facts.

One incident remains very vividly in my memory. A young British correspondent who had just arrived came into the Press Bar one day just before the polling date, and announced portentously: "The Communists are going to sweep the board."

There was general surprise, since there were no signs at all of a Communist victory.

Someone asked him how he figured that out.

"Simple," he said. "I've been all round town this morning counting the election posters, and the Communists have got twice as many as anyone else."

Of course, he was extra specially naive, but he is one of the types who supplies the readers of the big-business press with their news.

Warsaw . . .

The next election I witnessed was that held in Poland in January 1947, and British, American and other western correspondents really went to town with bloodthirsty stories of the proceedings.

It was, incidentally, an election unusually full of bloody incident, for armed fascist bands were still active in Poland at that date, and a total of 138 people—both members of electoral commissions and ordinary citizens—were killed during the election weeks by terrorist attacks.

But most of the correspondents were not interested in the fascist attacks; they had the job of convincing the British and American public that the elections were being "fixed," and they went about the job with a will. A few hours after the polls had closed one leading American correspondent went from colleague to colleague showing him a big bundle of polling slips he held in his hand.

"I just found these ballots in the toilet," he said. "This is real proof the elections were phoney."

I looked at the slips. Many of the parties taking part in the election had printed imitation ballot papers, showing the electorate how to vote, and had distributed the slips as election propaganda. The American correspondent was holding a handful of these slips, which had been distributed on every street corner for days past; now the election was over, the toilet seemed as good a place for them as any. I explained to him.

"Ruining a Story"

"Aw balony," he said, "you are just trying to ruin a good story." And he went off and wrote a startling exposure of how he had "unmasked mass election fraud."

Then, in 1949, I was in West Germany for the previous West German election. Here, from veterans in the Reuter foreign service I learned some of the tricks of providing fast and readable, even if not always accurate, election coverage.

For days before the polling took place we racked our brains to think up all possible "sob-stories" to put on the wires if the election itself did not provide enough news. We wrote the drafts of the stories to be sent in the event of all the different possible results (do you remember Orson Welles' film "Citizen Kane" with the two different newspaper front pages prepared in this way: "Kane elected" and "Fraud at the Polls"?); and wrote in advance those hardy annuals about the old woman of 110 going to the polls, about the voters trudging through mountain snow in the Alps to get to the polling station, and about heat-prostration at the polls.

In fact we wrote about almost everything, excecpt the very serious issued facing West German electors—the questions of German unity and world peace.

It was at this election too that a veteran gave me a tip on how to get ahead of rivals in reporting election results during the count.

"When the first few thousand votes are counted, just multiply by ten, or twenty, and start your story with the words: 'First unofficial figures show . . .' If you are right, fine, and if you are wrong you can always write another think piece about 'the swing of the pendulum'."

Berlin . . .

But my most interesting experience of all came during the years I spent as chief correspondent of Reuter's news agency in West Berlin.

On May 15th and 16th 1949 elections were held in East Germany for the People's Council, the forerunner of the present parliament. On May 17th the results were announced, and I sent my story over the teleprinter to Reuter's head office in London, starting something like this:

"A big majority of East Germans voted for the Socialist Unity Party-Christian Democratic-Liberal Democratic unity list of candidates in yesterday's Soviet Zone elections. Official figures just issued show that 66.1 % of votes cast went to the unity list, and 33.9 % against . . ."

"Unobjective"

I was sure that I had scooped the rival correspondents, and was sitting back feeling satisfied with myself when a snarling message of complaint came ticking in from Reuters desk editor in London, in roughly these words:

"We cannot tolerate your unobjective coverage East German elections. Associated, United, getting all play London eveningers with lead 'Huge anti-red vote.' Want matcher immediately."

That remains, for me, the last word that can be said about western press objectivity.

Incidentally, I would naturally prefer to use the authentic texts, instead of relying on my memory.

(cont on page 7)

Edited and published fortnightly by John Peet, Democratic German Report, Friedrichstrasse 167 III Berlin W 8, Telephone: 22 62 06. Printed in Germany by (36). Veröffentlicht unter Lizenz-Nr. 694 beim Presseamt des Ministerpräsidenten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik